

ASH WEDNESDAY — FEBRUARY 16, 1972
KEBOCH MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
7:30 P.M.

LITURGY OF WORSHIP

*Indicates Congregation Standing

May this be a most blessed Lenten and Easter Season
to each and every one.

"Unknown, Unseen", *UNHEARD* "

LENT

LVRK

Text: Luke: 22:10-13

"He said to *th*em, 'Behold, when you have entered the city a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him into the house which he enters, and tell the householder, 'The teacher says to you, Where is the guest room, where I am to eat the passover with my disciples?' And he will show you a large upper room furnished; there make ready.' And they went, and found it as he had told them."

This Lenten season the theme of these services is "The Personalities of the Passion." In other words we are going to be dealing each Wednesday evening with an individual or individuals, that were involved in the passion of Jesus Christ. We will try to present these characters in a way that they will be seen as playing an important role in the action of that particular moment. At least we hope to convey these people to you that they will assume flesh and blood and stand out, not, as mere names mentioned in a story. But as real live humans who had an impact, as well as a very definite role to play in the life of Jesus Christ.

There are several characters in the episode related in our scripture this evening. ~~The only one that anything is really~~ We do not really know very much about any of them except the man carrying the water jar. We do not know his name or who he is, and all we can conjecture about him, is that he is the servant of the man who owned the upper room used by Jesus for the Last Supper. So all we can say then, is these people involved were, ~~unknown, unseen, and unheard~~ unseen, unknown and unheard.

To say that the man carrying the water jar was unseen is erroneous. But he is not the real character behind the scenes. The real character is the man who so graciously loaned the room for *THE* Last Supper. Why was he unseen? Why did he not await the disciples

at the site, and personally escort them to the room and show them the accomadations? Why was he not seen ~~xxx~~ by the disciples, and why was he not anxious that everything would be satisfactory to their needs?

We cannot answer any of these questions, we can only assume that he had good reason for remaining in the background. Perhaps he was a man of high stature politically and could not risk being identified with this group of troublemakers. Perhaps he did not wish to be known as a friend of this Galilean.

It has been conjectured that he was the father of John Mark, the man considered by some as being the author of the Gospel Mark, ~~This is strictly guesswork~~ and the servant carrying the water jar is not really a servant, but is John Mark, the son of the household and the gospel writer. This is strictly guesswork though and we know nothing definite about their identity. ~~The really important thing is~~

~~that~~ What we do know is that the mysterious man in the background is unseen. He is not visible in the illustration, nor is he visible in any of the events in the life of Jesus as recorded in the gospels, Yet, we know that he is in the background.

There is a story of a king who placed a heavy stone in the road and then hid to see who would remove it. Men of all classes came by, and all of them worked their way around the stone without trying to remove it. Many of them loudly cursed the king for not keeping the road in good repair, but all of them did nothing to clear the road. Finally a peasant came along with his burden of vegetables and produce on his back, on the way to market. Putting his burden down, he pushed at the stone and pulled on it until finally he was able to roll it into the gutter. Then, turning around he spied a purse laying where the stone had been. He picked it up and opened it, and found that it was full of gold coins. Inside with the coins was a note saying that the king had put the stone there and whoever removed the stone and found

the purse with the gold coins could keep the purse.

The parallel here is that the purse was unseen until the large stone was removed from it. The man in the ^{SCRIPTURE} story was unseen and for all intents and purposes has remained unseen until this very day. Whatever good he may have done or whatever work he may have accomplished for the kingdom of God as a follower of Jesus Christ is not seen and will remain unseen forever.

I am sure we have all heard the very familiar march, "The Stars and Stripes Forever", by John Philip Sousa, and I am sure we are more or less acquainted with the spirit and the tempo in which it should be played. Mr. Sousa was sitting in his hotel room one summer evening, when he heard the familiar strains of this march coming through his window and being played by an organ grinder in the street below. But, it was being played in a very slow and lazy manner. Rushing to the street he shouted to the man, "Here, here, that is no way to play that march!" He seized the handle of the ~~organ and went rushing~~ organ and turned it vigorously. Out rushed the music spirited and snappy and the real martial air about it. The organ man smiled and bowed low to Mr. Sousa. The next night Mr. Sousa once again heard the organ grinder beneath his hotel window, but this time he was playing the march with the proper zest and gusto. Looking out of the window he saw a large crowd beginning to gather. On the organ was a large sign which bore the organ grinders name. ^{AND} Beneath ~~XXXX~~ his name was printed, "Pupil of John Philip Sousa."

The organ grinder was quick to put into practice what he had learned. He was not letting his lesson go unheard. Yet this is exactly the opposite of the man in the background of this biblical story. This householder or owner of the Upper Room, left his message go unheard. His lips were mute as far as speaking about his friend Jesus Christ. Once again as we said he was unseen we must also say he

was unheard.

A very common scrub woman by the name of Sophie was made fun of and teased for her duty which she called, "being called to scrub and preach." One of those who made fun of her said she was seen talking to one of those wooden indians in front of a cigar store some years back. Sophie's reply was, "that her eyesight was not so good, but talking to a ~~cigar~~ wooden indian about Christ was not as bad as being a wooden Christian and never talking to anybody about the Lord Jesus."

She was making her voice heard as a true follower of her Saviour and as the unheard man should have been doing in the Upper Room story.

And then, this man was unknown. No one mentions him by name or identifies him as more than just a hidden man in the dark background surrounding this entire story as it starts to unfold.

A minister called at the home of a rather poor couple. They lived out in the woods, in a rather humble and unpretentious house. It was more like a rough cabin. When he entered he noticed a 1000 bill hanging on the wall in a frame. "Where did you get that," he asked? "A sick man stopped at our house years ago. We nursed him back to health, and when he left he gave us the little picture. We thought it was so pretty we framed it." They were astounded to learn that the souvenir was worth so much and what it was able to do for them and their poverty. Here they had something of great value and never realized it.

So much like the unknown man in the story. He was not only unknown, but his message was unknown as well.

HE HAD SOMETHING OF
VALUE TO GIVE & HE
KEPT IT STORED AWAY.

We can draw some parallels for our lives from all of this. We need to ask ourselves and those around us, are we unseen? Or unheard? Or unknown? Does our Christianity just show or become

known on Sunday or during a church service? Are we silent about our Saviour? Are we mute about his message? Do our friends and neighbors know us for our faith?

The famed minister Phillips Brooks told the story of the missionary who came home on furlough. He wanted to take something back to his mission station for the natives. He finally found a rather large bronze sundial. So when he arrived back at the station he showed it to the natives and explained its workings and secured their help in setting it up. The natives all seemed very happy and pleased with the sun dial. Imagine his astonishment when several days later he returned to that part of the village and found that the natives had built a shelter over the sun dial to protect it.

Isn't this what many folks do with their religion? They try to fold it up and put it away and protect it from life. If this Lenten season does nothing else for us, it should make us more aware of what being a Christian really is. It should make us heard and seen and known. This is the role of a Christian and ~~that~~ may God grant us the ability to live and act this way.

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1968 FEBRUARY
10:00 AM
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Call to Worship: The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.

Call to Confession: In this is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation of our sins, Let us come now in humble confession.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us

Assurance of Pardon : The Lord is merciful and gracious. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

Amen.